

Contents

External links

Distribution

- Switzerland: all German-speaking parts of the country except Samnaun
- Germany: center and south of Baden-Württemberg, Swabia, and certain districts of Bavaria
- Austria: Vorarlberg, Reutte District of Tyrol
- Liechtenstein: entire country
- France: Alsace region (Alsatian dialect) and in some villages of the Phalsbourg county
- Italy: Gressoney-La-Trinité, Gressoney-Saint-Jean, Issime, Alagna Valsesia and Rimella, in some other villages almost extinct
- United States: Allen and Adams County, Indiana by the Amish there and also in their daughter settlements in Indiana and other U.S. states.
- Venezuela: Colonia Tovar (Colonia Tovar dialect)

Status

In Germany and other European countries, the abstand and ausbau language framework is used to decide what is a language and what a dialect. According to this framework Alemannic forms of German form a dialect.

Alemannic	
	Alemannish
	<i>Alemannisch</i>
Pronunciation	[alɛ ˈman(:)ɪ f] (listen)
Native to	Switzerland: entire German-speaking part, except for the town of Samnaun. Germany: most of Baden-Württemberg and Bavarian Swabia. Austria: Vorarlberg and some parts of Tyrol. Liechtenstein: entire country. France: most of Alsace. Italy: some parts of Aosta Valley and northern Piedmont United States: Amish in Adams and Allen counties, Indiana Venezuela: Alemán Coloniero
Native speakers	7,162,000 (2004–2012) ^[1]
Language family	Indo-European - Germanic - West Germanic - Irminonic - High German - Upper German Alemannic
Writing system	Latin, Historically Elder Futhark
Language codes	
ISO 639-2	gsw (https://www.loc.gov/standard/s/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=177)

continuum and are clearly dialects. Some linguists and organisations that differentiate between languages and dialects primarily on the grounds of mutual intelligibility, such as SIL International and UNESCO, describe Alemannic as one of several independent languages. ISO 639-3 distinguishes four languages: *gsw* (Swiss German), *swg* (Swabian German), *wae* (Walser German) and *gct* (Alemán Coloniero, spoken since 1843 in Venezuela).

Standard German is used in writing, and orally in formal contexts, throughout the Alemannic-speaking regions (with the exception of Alsace, where French or the Alsatian dialect of Alemannic is used).

Variants

Alemannic comprises the following variants:

- Swabian (mostly in Swabia, in Germany, covering large parts of Württemberg and all of Bavarian Swabia). Unlike most other Alemannic dialects, it does not retain the Middle High German monophthongs *û*, *î* but shifts them to [ou], [ei] (as opposed to Standard German [au], [aɪ]). For this reason, "Swabian" is sometimes used in opposition to "Alemannic".
- Low Alemannic dialects. Retain German initial /k/ as [kʰ] (or [kx]) rather than fricativising to [x] as in High Alemannic. Subvariants:
 - Upper-Rhine Alemannic in Southwestern Baden and its variant Alsatian (in Alsace, France)
 - Alemán Coloniero (in Venezuela)
 - Basel German (in Basel, Switzerland)
- Lake Constance Alemannic (Bodenseealemannisch) (in Southern Württemberg, Southeastern Baden, Northwestern Vorarlberg), a transitional dialect, close to High Alemannic, with some Swabian features in the vowel system.
- High Alemannic (mostly in Switzerland, parts of Vorarlberg, and in the southern parts of the Black Forest in Germany). Complete the High German consonant shift by fricativising initial /k/ to [x]. Subvariants:
 - Bernese German
 - Zürich German
 - Vorarlbergisch
 - Liechtensteinisch
- Highest Alemannic (in the Canton of Valais, in the Walser settlements (e.g., in the canton of Grisons), in the Bernese Oberland and in the German-speaking part of Fribourg) does not have the hiatus diphthongisation of other dialects of German. For example: ['ʃneɪ̯jə] ('to snow') instead of ['ʃniː.ə(n)], ['bʊwə] ('to build') instead of ['bʊː.ə(n)]. Subvariants:
 - Walliser German
 - Walser German

The Alemannic dialects of Switzerland are often called Swiss German or *Schwiizerdütsch*.

Written Alemannic

The oldest known texts in Alemannic are brief Elder Futhark inscriptions dating to the sixth century (Bülach fibula, Pforzen buckle, Nordendorf fibula). In the Old High German period, the first coherent texts are recorded in the St. Gall Abbey, among them the eighth century Paternoster,^[5]

Fater unser, thu bist in himile

ISO 639-3	Variously: gct – Colonia Tovar gsw – Swiss German and Alsatian swg – Swabian wae – Walser
Glottolog	alem1243 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/alem1243) ^[2]
IETF	gsw ^[3]
 Blue indicates the traditional distribution area of Western Upper German (=Alemannic) dialects.	

uuhi namu dinan
qhueme rihhi di'n
uuerde uuillo diin,
so in himile, sosa in erdu
prooth unseer emezzihic kip uns hiutu
oblaz uns sculdi unsero
so uuir oblazem uns skuldikem
enti ni unsih firleit in khorunka
uzzer losi unsih fona ubile

Due to the importance of the Carolingian abbeys of St. Gall and Reichenau Island, a considerable part of the Old High German corpus has Alemannic traits. Alemannic Middle High German is less prominent, in spite of the Codex Manesse compiled by Johannes Hadlaub of Zürich. The rise of the Old Swiss Confederacy from the fourteenth century led to the creation of Alemannic Swiss chronicles. Huldrych Zwingli's bible translation of the 1520s (the 1531 Froschauer Bible) was in an Alemannic variant of Early Modern High German. From the seventeenth century, written Alemannic was displaced by Standard German, which emerged from sixteenth century Early Modern High German, in particular in the wake of Martin Luther's bible translation of the 1520s. The 1665 revision of the Froschauer Bible removed the Alemannic elements, approaching the language used by Luther. For this reason, no binding orthographical standard for writing modern Alemannic emerged, and orthographies in use usually compromise between a precise phonological notation, and proximity to the familiar Standard German orthography (in particular for loanwords).

Johann Peter Hebel published his *Allemannische Gedichte* in 1803. Swiss authors often consciously employ Helvetisms within Standard German, notably Jeremias Gotthelf in his novels set in the Emmental, Friedrich Glauser in his crime stories, and more recently Tim Krohn in his *Quatemberkinder*.

Characteristics

- The diminutive is used frequently in all Alemannic dialects. Northern and eastern dialects use the suffix *-le*; southern dialects use the suffix *-li* (Standard German suffix *-lein* or *-chen*). As in standard German, these suffixes cause umlaut. Depending on dialect, 'little house' may be *Heisle*, *Hüüsle*, *Hüüsli* or *Hiisli* (Standard German *Häuslein* or *Häuschen*). Some varieties have plural diminutives in *-ler* or *-lich*.
- Northern variants of Alemannic (Swabian and Low Alemannic), like standard German, pronounce *ch* as a uvular or velar [χ] or [x] (*Ach-Laut*) after back vowels (*a*, *o*, *u*) and as a palatal [ç] consonant (*Ich-Laut*) elsewhere. High Alemannic, Lake Constance Alemannic and Highest Alemannic dialects exclusively use the *Ach-Laut*.
- In most Alemannic dialects, the past participle of the verb meaning *to be* (*sein* in standard German, with past participle *gewesen*) derives from a form akin to *gesein* (*gsi*, *gsinn*, *gsei* etc.).

Some conjugated forms of the verb *to be* in Alemannic dialects

English (standard German)	Low Swabian	Alsatian Lower High Alsace	Allgäuerisch	Lower Markgräflerland	Upper Swabian	Eastern Swiss German	Western Swiss German	Sensler
I am (ich bin)	I ben	Ìch bì	I bi	Ich bi	I bee	I bi	I(g) bi [ɪɡ̊ ɸɪ]	I bü/bi
you (sg.) are (du bist)	du bisch	dü bìsch	du bisch	du bisch	d(o)u bisch	du bisch	du bisch [ɸɸ ɸɪʒ]	du büsch/bisch
he is (er ist)	er isch	är ìsch	är isch	är isch	är isch	är isch	är isch [æɾ ɪʒ]	är isch
she is (sie ist)	sia isch	sa ìsch	sia isch	sie isch	si isch	si isch	si isch [sɪ ɪʒ]	sia isch
it is (es ist)	es isch	äs ìsch	as isch	as isch	äs isch	äs isch	äs isch [æʒ̥ (əʒ̥) ɪʒ̥]	as isch
we are (wir sind)	mr sen(d)	mìr sìn	mir send/sönd	mir sin	mr send	m(i)r send/sön/sinn	mir sy [mɪɾ sɪ]	wier sy
you (pl.) are (ihr seid)	ihr sen(d)	ìhr sìn	ihr send	ihr sin	ihr send	i(i)r sönd/sind	dir syt [ɸɪɾ sɪt]	ier syt
they are (sie sind)	se sen(d)	sa sìn	dia send	si sin	dia send	si sind/sönd	si sy [sɪ sɪ]	si sy
I have been (ich bin ... gewesen)	i ben gwää	ìch bì gsì	i bi gsi	ich bi gsi	i bee gsei	i bi gsi	i bi gsy [ɪ(ɡ̊) ɸɪ ksi:]	i bü/bi gsy

See also

- Alemannic separatism
- German dialects
- Muettersproch-Gsellschaft
- Muggeseggele
- Swiss German

References

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Swiss German and Alsatian (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/gsw/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)

Swabian (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/swg/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)

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External links

-  Media related to Alemannic German at Wikimedia Commons
 -  The dictionary definition of *alemannic german* at Wiktionary
 - Alemanni poems and Alemanni encyclopedia -German- (<http://www.badische-seiten.de/alemannisch.php>)
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